Ford Motor Company Long Beach Assembly Plant,
Crane
700 Henry Ford Avenue
Long Beach
Los Angeles County
California

HAER No. CA-82-C

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
Western Regional Office
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California 94102

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
FORD MOTOR COMPANY LONG BEACH ASSEMBLY PLANT, GANTRY CRANE

HAER No. CA-82-C

Location:	700 Henry Ford Avenue, Port of Long Beach, County of Los Angeles, California USGS Quandrangle: Long Beach, CA UTM Coordinates: 11.385290.337030
Date of Construction:	1929-1930
Architect:	Albert Kahn, Inc., Detroit MI
Contractors:	General Contractor: Clinton Construction Co.
Present Owner:	Port of Long Beach P.O. Box 570 Long Beach, CA 90801
Present Use:	Demolished, October 1990 - January 1991
Significance:	Ford Motor Company built the Long Beach Assembly Plant during 1929-1930 as one of six contemporaneous assembly plants constructed in the United States. The overall purpose of these plants was to expand production of Ford's Model A, which replaced the Model T in 1927. Albert Kahn, the architect for the Long Beach Assembly Plant, also designed the other five Ford Assembly Plants. The Long Beach Assembly Plant was the only plant outside of Michigan to have a Pressed Steel Department as an integral part of the manufacturing and assembly process. Kahn's architectural design incorporated an enormous articulated structure that retained aesthetic qualities, yet permitted functional use of space. The Long Beach Assembly Plant operated until 1958 and typified the Ford Assembly Line concept. On a national scale the Long Beach Assembly Plant reflected a national trend of industrial growth, mass production of consumer goods, and the consumption of those goods.
Project Information:	The former Ford Motor Company Long Beach Assembly Plant was evaluated eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Port of Long Beach sought to redevelop this property, ultimately resulting in plans to demolish and remove all vestiges of this plant. The Port of Long Beach's

application for a 404 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, invoked the Section 106 Process. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) signed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation mandated Historic American Engineering Recordation (HAER) documentation of the the Ford Motor Company Long Beach Assembly Plant. The Port of Long Beach retained Chambers Group, Inc. to document the plant.

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(Architectural Photographs)

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Dietrich Floeter Photography
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(Photographic Photocopies)

Date: June 1991

PART I HISTORIC NARRATIVE

Ford Motor Company built the Long Beach Assembly Plant during 1929-1930. A historical narrative pertaining to the history of the Ford Motor Company Long Beach Assembly Plant is presented in the documentation for the Assembly Plant, CA-82. The following discussion is focused on the extant Gantry Crane.

Two (2) Browning Gantry Cranes (20 ton capacity) were originally purchased for use at the Long Beach Assembly Plant (Long Beach Assembly Plant, Specifications in Offer to Sell, 1959, LBP). In a photograph taken by Lawrence Inman, April 13, 1990 (CA-82-C-6), both cranes were depicted alongside the eastern side of the Warehouse.

PART II ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The following description was based on an analysis of the 1930 Inman photograph, as well as on-site observation in 1990. Two Browning Gantry Cranes, situated at the northeast and southeast ends of the Warehouse were originally in place at the Long Beach Assembly Plant. Each crane was seated atop a platform constructed of riveted steel I-beams. The outside leg of each crane's platform was attached to two railroad-type wheels that ran in a track recessed in concrete, at the edge of the dock that ran from the eastern side of the Warehouse out to the waters of Cerritos Channel. This track ran from the northeast to the southeast corners of the Warehouse. The other portion of the crane's platform was attached to a "runway" (CA-82-A-49) that was mounted on the eastern, exterior side of the Warehouse. The "runway" was situated immediately below the mid-level horizontal fenestration, that was immediately below a cantelevered iron deck or platform that adjoined the second floor of the Warehouse.

A single set of railroad tracks entered into the Ford Motor Company Long Beach Assembly Plant from the northeast corner of the property (Plot Plan LB74, 1947, LBP). These tracks were split into one set that ran into the Pressed Steel Building, while the other two tracks ran southward alongside the exterior of the Pressed Steel Building and Warehouse portions of the Assembly Plant, terminating at the southeast corner of the Oilhouse. In the Inman 1930 photograph (CA-82-C-6) and the 1990 De Vries photographs (CA-82-C-1 and C-2) these railroad tracks were located directly below the Browning Gantry Cranes. Apparently, the cranes were used to unload load materials onto incoming and outgoing railroad cars. Another Inman photograph (CA-82-A-60) taken in 1930 shows the Ford Ship "Onondaga" having a load of spoked wheels unloaded by one of the gantry cranes. Thus, these cranes were instrumental in unloading raw materials that were sent to the plant for use in the assembly of automobiles. Historic research does not indicate if the cranes were used in loading crated, pressed steel fenders and other parts made at the Long Beach Plant, onto railroad cars or ships. During the HAER documentation of the Long Beach Assembly Plant only the northern gantry crane was in-situ (CA-82-C-1 thru C-5).

PART III SOURCES OF INFORMATION

See Part III Sources of Information, Ford Motor Company Long Beach Assembly Plant, HAER No. CA-82, pages 64 through 100.